

REMARKS**Claim 1**

The Examiner rejected claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Liu et al (U.S. Patent No. 6,230,405 B1). Applicants have amended claim 1 to more particularly recite that the region of strands are removed from the mold cavity before the potting compound hardens. In order for a section 102(b) reference to be valid as prior art, every element and limitation of the claimed present invention - as literally defined in the claims - must be disclosed within the piece of prior art. *Jamesbury Corp. v. Litton Indus. Products*, 756 F.2d 1556, 225 USPQ 253 (Fed.Cir. 1985); *Atlas Powder Company v. du Pont*, 750 F.2d 1569 (Fed.Cir. 1984); *American Hospital Supply v. Travenol Labs*, 745 F.2d 1 (Fed.Cir. 1984). Accordingly, since this step is not taught by Liu et al., Applicants submit that the amendment overcomes this rejection.

Applicant further submits that should the Examiner take the position that claim 1 is obvious under 35 U.S.C. § 103, such a position would be untenable. Liu et al actually teaches away from using Applicants' method step of "removing said region of strands from said strand cavity within said mold before said liquid potting compound hardens." As an example, Liu et al. relies on the presence of the mold during the "setting" process to create the shape of cover 30, protrusions 34, and relief portions 32.

Claim 5

The Examiner rejected claim 5 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being anticipated by Liu et al in view of Brown (U.S. Patent No. 3,859,780). The Examiner cited Brown as teaching Applicants' "separator." Applicants respectfully disagree.

Claim 5 recites a limitation which is much more specific than a “separator.” Claim 5 recites the limitation of “providing said mold with a separator positioned to splay said region of strands apart when said region of strands is placed within said strand cavity.” Accordingly, the fact that the separator *is part of* the mold and that the separator *is positioned* to splay the strands apart *when* the strands are placed within the cavity are material limitations of claim 5. It should be noted that a prior art reference does not create a case of prima facie obviousness if it fails to disclose a material element or limitation claimed in the present invention. *In re Evanega*, 829 F.2d 1110 (Fed. Cir. 1987).

Brown’s “separator” is not part of the mold at all. Brown describes the separator as a circular spacer which is placed around the rope. Screws are then inserted through the circular spacer in a radial fashion. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that Brown does not disclose a separator having the material elements or limitations recited in claim 5.

Claims 8 and 11

The Examiner rejected claims 8 and 11 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being anticipated by Liu et al in view of Hinduja et al (U.S. Patent No. 5,424,017). Hinduja et al. was cited for teaching Applicants’ injector. Applicants respectfully disagree.

Claims 8 and 11 recite other limitations which are not disclosed in the cited prior art. The Examiner cited Hinduja’s pin 44 as disclosing the “needle” of Applicants’ injector; however, claims 8 and 11 also require the step of “clamping said injector against said mold so that said needle protrudes into said region of strands and said sealing surface seals said open end of said strand cavity.” Hinduja’s “needle” does not protrude into the region of strands. The orifice of

the injector is flush with molding surface 26. Furthermore, Hinduja's injector (42) does not have a "sealing surface" which seals the open end of the strand cavity. As noted previously with respect to claim 5, a prior art reference does not create a case of prima facie obviousness if it fails to disclose a material element or limitation claimed in the present invention. *In re Evanega*, 829 F.2d 1110 (Fed. Cir. 1987). Applicants respectfully submit that a prima facie case of obviousness has not been established with respect to claims 8 and 11 since multiple material elements of the claims are not disclosed by the cited references.

Claim 13 and 20

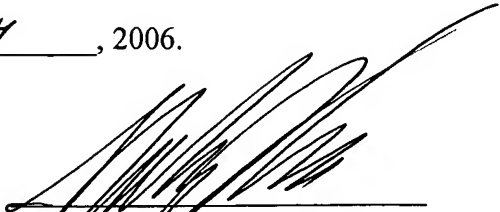
The Examiner rejected claims 13 and 20 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being anticipated by Liu et al in view of Hinduja et al. Applicants have amended claims 13 and 20 to more particularly recite that the region of strands are removed from the mold cavity *before the liquid potting compound hardens*. Neither reference teaches this method step; therefore Applicants submit that the amendments overcome these rejections.

Applicants further notes that both of the cited references actually teach away from the method step of removing the strands before the potting compound hardens. As discussed previously with respect to the Liu et al. patent, Liu et al. relies on the presence of the mold during the "setting" process to create the shape of cover 30, protrusions 34, and relief portions 32. Hinduja et al similarly relies on the presence of the mold during the setting process. (See column 4, lines 18-20).

Conclusion

Applicant believes that the Claims are now in condition for allowance, and respectfully requests the Examiner to withdraw the rejections.

Respectfully submitted this 21st day of July, 2006.



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